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Conserving Biodiversity

The WCPA – Marine Plan of Action: some answers to frequently asked questions



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Why does WCPA need a Marine Plan of Action?

Over recent decades there has been a rapid growth in both number of Marine Protected Areas worldwide and also organisations involved in their implementation. There is also increased knowledge gathered on the nature and scale of threats faced by the marine environment, and its role and limitations in supplying resources to support sustainable development. With this increased complexity and sense of urgency to act in the most meaningful and effective manner, WCPA – Marine needs to focus on a small number of actions that it is best placed to deliver in order to complement ongoing work by many other key players on MPAs.

The Plan of Action is a simple structured and inclusive process to gather our thoughts, transform them into deliverables and actions, and set them out in a clear and concise way to a broad audience.

Conserving Biodiversity

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FAQ

World Commission on
Protected Areas
IUCN - The World
Conservation Union
Rue Mauverney 28,
CH-1196 Gland,
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 999 0160
Fax: +41 22 999 0015

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How can I get involved?

Getting involved is simple. We need to hear your views. Please contact your regional lead. An initial list is provided in the Plan of Action (Annex 3) and an updated list with the latest appointments is available on the WCPA – Marine web pages at: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/biome/marine/programme.htm>

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What can I do if I get involved?

By contacting your regional lead you will have the opportunity to support the development of the Plan of Action by contributing your ideas and knowledge to shape our future priorities. Over time you will be given the opportunity to develop your involvement by volunteering to participate in priority projects, helping to develop regional action plans, or perhaps by agreeing to lead for WCPA – Marine on a particular issue worldwide.

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What are the benefits of participating in this process?

In addition of the benefits that all WCPA members receive (Best Practice Guidelines on protected areas, PARKS, WCPA Newsletter and other publications), as a WCPA Marine member the individual benefits of participating relate first and foremost to networking with like-minded colleagues in WCPA – Marine region, either at a regional level, or in relation to specific issues of interest. Using the Plan of Action process will enable shared priorities to be identified, which will be more effectively addressed by working together rather than in isolation. As a result individual concerns can be voiced and may be addressed in a regional and global context.

The ‘critical mass’ of the WCPA – Marine network will lead to better use of time and resources, greater depth of analysis and comprehensive action, and more individual learning and self-development opportunities. It provides a mechanism for sharing information, for supporting individuals in taking forward MPAs and for providing greater access to information and knowledge than otherwise would be the case. In addition your technical contribution to any leading product or publication coming out of the Plan of Action will be appropriately acknowledged. Finally by contributing to the network you have the unique opportunity to influence the regional and global agendas on MPAs, thus helping to convey practical experience and knowledge into policy and decision-making guidance.

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Isn't the consultation version of the Plan of Action rather general?

The short answer to this question is ‘yes’. There are good reasons for this. Many members and partners will have different starting points for their understanding of how WCPA – Marine should

 Mountains

Task Forces

 Caves and Karst

 Conservation
Planning

 Grasslands

 High Seas

 Islands

operate. The focus in this consultation draft is on the overall process and providing the basic framework to gather information, expand the WCPA – Marine network, and to connect Commission members and partner organisation together in a way where they can speak a common language.

This is, however, just the start of the process. Through your responses to the consultation we will re-draft the Plan of Action to set out your recommendations for the future, and our agreed priority projects and programmes. In this way and with your advice, by the beginning of next year we will rapidly move to a document that identifies and addresses our global concerns. Such a document will also provide the basis for the development of Regional Action Plans that use the framework of the Global Plan of Action.

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How do I identify a priority?

Please consult with your fellow WCPA members and partner organisations for your regions. This is so we receive coordinated advice on future priorities. The WCPA – Marine regional leads identified in the Plan of Action will assist you in this process. Please restrict your joint submissions to focus on the top two or three priorities for your region.

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What should the priority focus on?

Priorities should focus on those aspects of MPAs that you believe are the most important issues for WCPA – Marine to address as part of our global mission. This may relate to site issues and/or to broader themes and processes. The priorities you identify should be the ones that are on the critical path for making MPAs and MPA networks happen, and that will really make a difference in moving the MPA agenda along for your region. Priorities should relate to the mission of WCPA – Marine and the three themes given in the Plan of Action. Some examples of what priorities may focus on are provided in the Plan of Action in section 11 and Table 2.

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What happens if there is no WCPA – Marine regional lead identified for my part of the world?

The Plan of Action provides an initial list of regional leads for WCPA – Marine. Please check the WCPA website for the most up-to-date information on regional appointments: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/biome/marine/programme.htm>

If the website does not show a regional lead for your area you have three options:

- Volunteer to fulfil that regional role and contact the marine Vice Chair to put yourself forward.
- Contact WCPA – Marine colleagues for the region and agree on a nomination from within or outside the existing WCPA membership to propose as regional lead to the marine Vice

Chair.

- Contact the regional representative of the Programme on Protected Areas and the Global Marine Programme for advice (a list is provided in Annex 4 of the Plan of Action).
- Contact the existing WCPA regional vice chair for advice (see <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/region/regionindex.htm> for contact details).

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How will you use our information to identify the priorities to take forward?

Following the consultation period your recommendations will be drawn together, and expressed by WCPA – Marine region. There will then follow a period of reflection with key partners and colleagues at global and regional scales to refine this list down to a core set of regional and global priorities. The Senior Advisory Group will have an important part to play in this process.

A strong emphasis needs to be placed on implementation – what are you doing about this?

We are already focussing on implementation by opening discussions with foundations and the donor community. Once we have refined down to a small set of priorities, these will form the core of the second version of the Plan of Action. This will become available early next year. At this point we would like your support to help transform the short-listed priorities into practical projects and programmes. Such support could take the form of your time, expertise and/or financial or in-kind resources, and volunteering to lead a particular emerging WCPA – Marine theme, project or programme.

Where such offers are insufficient to deliver the required outcomes we will work with partners, interested foundations, the private sector, and the donor community in addressing these resource gaps on such priority issues.

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